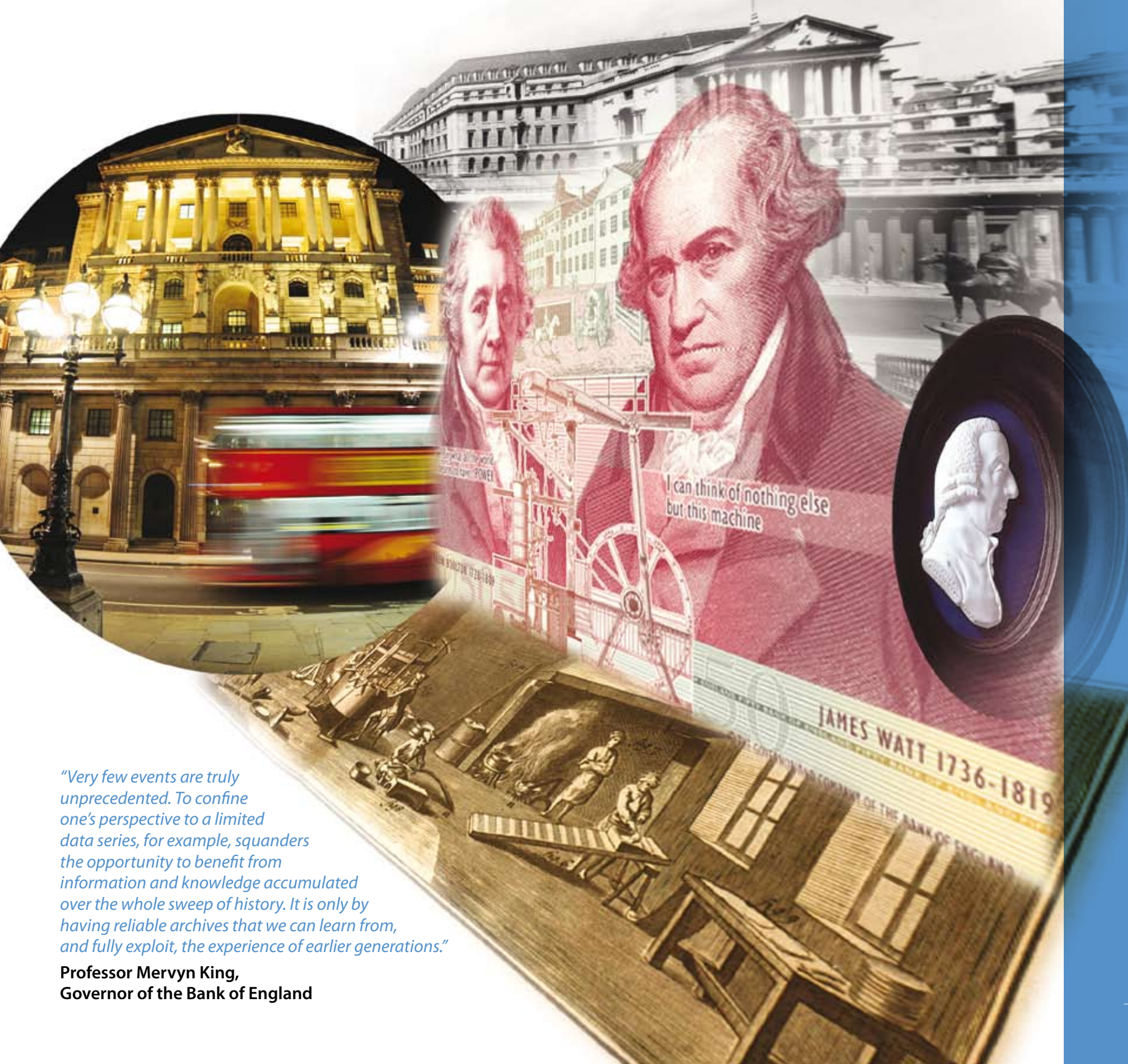




Corporate Memory

A guide to managing business archives



"Very few events are truly unprecedented. To confine one's perspective to a limited data series, for example, squanders the opportunity to benefit from information and knowledge accumulated over the whole sweep of history. It is only by having reliable archives that we can learn from, and fully exploit, the experience of earlier generations."

**Professor Mervyn King,
Governor of the Bank of England**

Foreword

History is more or less bunk, declared Henry Ford in 1916. The company that bears his name is not so dismissive of its 106-year past. Ford's US website has a prominent heritage section with eye-catching pages celebrating Ford's contribution to automotive history. Ford is not alone in seeking to capitalise on its history. Many firms value a continuous thread from yesterday to tomorrow, in order to convey their past successes, company stability, and future possibilities.

Why do they do this? More and more companies are integrating their corporate history into positive messages to affirm that they have seen, survived, and often grown through times of economic challenge and uncertainty. Across the globe communications and marketing teams are re-engineering corporate branding and identity to emphasise their pasts. Most successful companies have secret commercial weapons in the form of their archives, an often under-used asset that can be used to increase brand awareness, build commercial identity and help grow business.

Information is a powerful business tool that can be turned to corporate advantage. Companies already know that research and development information is valuable, but the knowledge, experience and investment locked in company archives is an asset that can underpin core business.

Business archives contain the evidence that gives a company its edge or marks it out as different and special, making it stand out from its competitors. The brewing company Bass is a very special case in trademark law as it was granted the first registered trademark ever issued anywhere in the world, giving Bass a name and trademark distinction no other product will ever have. And how many company archives and vaults contain information that is worth its weight in gold, such as the recipe for Pimm's No.1 Cup or HP sauce?

This booklet is designed to help the business community maximise their own archives and records collections, and to use this business information asset effectively to improve performance, explore new markets and above all to succeed in today's competitive global markets. The following pages show how successful companies are using their archives to exploit their uniqueness and gain an edge over the competition.

Natalie Ceeney
Chief Executive, The National Archives

What are business archives?

- A unique asset which every company has.
- Business archives capture the knowledge and experience of working for your company.
- Business archives can be documents, films, photographs, oral testimonies, adverts, electronic records.
- Business archives are created as part of everyday work – they are integral to your company and exist as part of your normal business.

Why do companies manage their archives?

Around 20% of FTSE 100 companies and many private companies employ professional archivists to actively exploit their business records. **Why?**

Growth

Archives can be used in marketing and customer relations to increase **brand knowledge** and awareness. Archives have direct commercial value as a source of new **product innovation** – they are literally full of ideas that can be rediscovered and repackaged for today's market, delivering authentic classic, retro and vintage styles.

Differentiation

Every company is unique – with its own **story of achievement**, company culture, **reputation**, products and people. Telling your story through product literature, websites and employee induction materials can create the kind of **loyalty and pride** that in tough markets leverages a real competitive advantage.

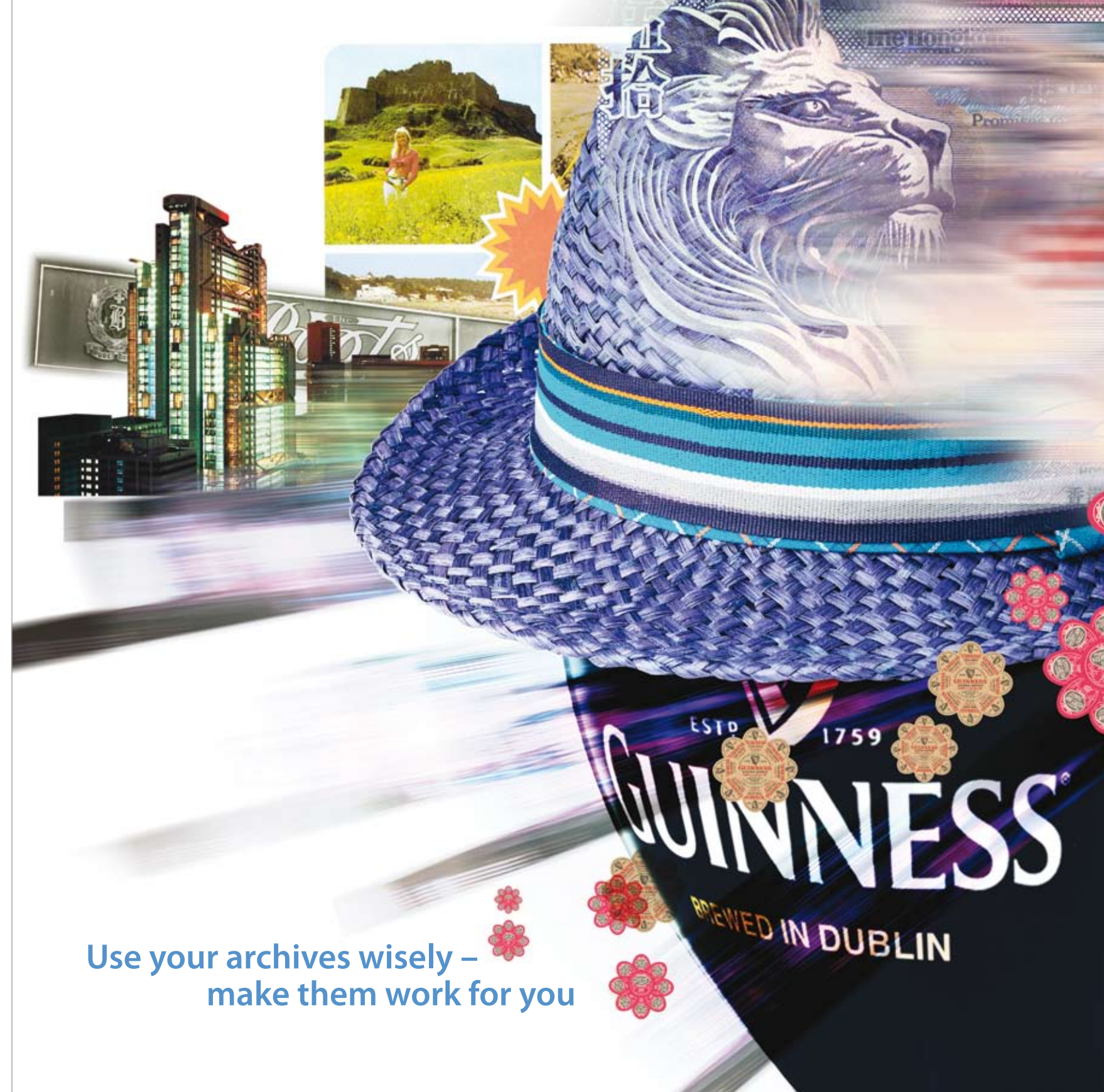
Protection

The archive is the memory of your business – holding **knowledge and evidence** of commercial activities, forgotten when people move on. Archives can provide evidence against hostile litigation, trademark infringement, or assault on reputation. More routinely, they are an unparalleled source of **management information**.

Exposure to the corporate memory shows today's employees, from boardroom to shop floor, that your company has weathered political and economic uncertainties, technological and organisational change, growth and recession.

Whatever your business, whatever your sector, by keeping archives you capture today's experience, knowledge and company know-how for tomorrow's management team. It's a powerful tool, it's company-generated and it's yours... so don't throw it away – make it work for you.

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Use your archives wisely –
make them work for you

Today, Thomas Cook UK & Ireland is the second largest leisure travel group in the UK with around 17,000 employees. It is now part of Thomas Cook Group plc

Thomas Cook is the world's best-known name in travel, thanks to the inspiration and dedication of a single man

During the Second World War, a deal was brokered to save the company from financial collapse and the organisation was sold to Britain's four mainline railway companies. In 1948 the firm became state-owned as part of the nationalised British Railways



Thomas Cook survived the recession of the 1970s – a recession which saw the collapse of several travel firms – and enhanced its reputation for providing excellent service by launching a Money Back Guarantee scheme in 1974

During the first quarter of the twentieth century – a period which saw the introduction of winter sports holidays, tours by motor car and commercial air travel – the firm of Thos Cook and Son dominated the world travel scene

CASE STUDY Marketing and customer relations



Thomas Cook Group plc

The name Thomas Cook is one of the world's best-known in the travel business, thanks to the inspiration and dedication of a single man. Thomas Cook began his international travel company in 1841, with a successful one-day rail excursion at a shilling a head from Leicester to Loughborough on 5 July. From these humble beginnings Thomas Cook launched a whole new kind of company devoted to helping Britons see the world.


Thomas Cook Group plc possesses a unique collection of archive material covering all aspects of the company's history from the founder's first excursion on 5 July 1841 to the present. This material is held in the Company Archives, which functions as a corporate memory, offering an information service to the company's various departments and to interested members of the public, as well as providing research facilities for academics, journalists and picture researchers from all over the world.

Images of historical brochure covers from the archives appear within all current mainstream company travel brochures to demonstrate the company's depth of experience and provide a quiet reassurance of confidence and quality to customers. The entire range of Thomas Cook guidebooks and timetables is being rebranded to reflect the fact that the company has been in the publishing business since 1873. Information and images including historical guidebooks and timetables from the archives have provided inspiration for the designers.

In 2009, Thomas Cook's marketing team creatively used archive images from the collection to promote the 140th anniversary of Cook's first tour to Egypt in a two-page spread within Thomas Cook's Signature Egypt brochure. This was followed through with archive information used in the press release, and archive images used to produce the cover of a special anniversary guidebook. This created a strong brand identity and a unique promotional aspect to the campaign and product.

In 2008 – the 200th anniversary of Thomas Cook's birth – Thomas Cook Tours arranged anniversary tours, again using archive images to promote the brand. Thomas Cook Sport in 2007 offered a special boxing package to see Ricky Hatton fight in New York. A similar package (to see the Tunney-Dempsey world heavyweight fight) was offered by Thomas Cook in 1927 (exactly 80 years earlier) and archive material relating to the 1927 tour was used to promote the 2007 tour. Thomas Cook Sport has also used archive material to promote football, rugby, cricket and Formula One packages.

Facsimiles from the archives, such as framed brochure covers, are regularly used as sought-after corporate gifts for VIPs including CEOs of hotel chains, cruise lines or foreign Ministers of Tourism, and as staff awards. Thomas Cook Group plc **CEO Manny Fontenla-Novoa** points out that, *"Very few companies in any industry sector can boast such a rich history and heritage"*.

 thomascook.com



DIAGEO

Diageo plc

GUINNESS® is the world's most famous stout, created and founded by the legendary Arthur Guinness. In 1759, Arthur took over a small four-acre brewery at St James's Gate Brewery in Dublin. Today, GUINNESS® beer is truly a global brand, enjoyed in over 150 countries around the world.

The Guinness Archive collection reflects this remarkable 250 years of Guinness history. The collection contains records dating from 1759, as well as photographs, film, video, memorabilia, posters, maps, bottles and other objects documenting the history of the company and the brand across the world.

The heritage of GUINNESS® lies at the heart of the brand and the Archive collection is used by a range of business units across Diageo, the parent company, to promote and protect the brand. Some of the activities the Archive team have been involved in to celebrate 'Guinness 250' are outlined below.

The Archive team works closely with public relations and marketing departments around the world to provide marketing support on the heritage of the brand. This year, major support has been provided to reflect ongoing global marketing campaigns celebrating 250 years of the brand. A new website resource for the media covering the 'Guinness 250' story was created and written in conjunction with the Archive team, featuring over 1,000 historical photographs and documents from the collection. In addition, old GUINNESS® television adverts from the past 50 years were revived from the Archive and shown on national television.


The collection also serves to inspire the creation of new merchandise products, licensed by the GUINNESS® brand. From t-shirts and mugs to posters, the heritage of the

GUINNESS® brand is celebrated and brought up-to-date in a contemporary way. Designers utilise the archive collection and the knowledge of the archivists to create new merchandise, based on past advertising. Commemorative packaging has been specially designed for 'Guinness 250' using archive photographs, and a range of limited edition products inspired by the Archive collection have been produced.

"[In exploring the Archive,] I find that the brand comes alive for the licensees, they begin to recognise the provenance, heritage and longevity of the brand. This recognition is channelled down the line into creating commercial product ideas for the GUINNESS Official Merchandise range."

Niamh Carney, Product Development Manager, Diageo Global Licensing

Like any business, Diageo actively protects its intellectual property. The Archive collections are used by the Diageo Legal department on an ongoing basis to prove cases of copyright and trademark infringement. The range and extent of the collection allows the legal team to successfully challenge infringement cases across the world.

 guinness.com



Images used supplied by the Guinness Archive and are copyright of Diageo



GUINNESS beer is not black but rather ruby red because of the addition of roasted barley

The iconic toucan ad campaign of the 1930s remains recognisable today

In 2009 the Guinness® Company celebrated 250 years since Arthur Guinness signed a 9,000-year lease on the St James's Gate brewery

10 million glasses of GUINNESS beer are enjoyed every day around the world



Boots UK

The archives at Boots UK contain a wealth of material relating to over 160 years of health and beauty retailing. They are consistently used to support brand marketing, and as inspiration for the development of new products. A recent example is the new global beauty brand – Boots Original Beauty Formula – that was launched simultaneously in the USA and Europe in February 2009 and is proving to be a great success.

“The aim was to create a modern brand that had a vintage look and feel. The designer drew inspiration from the style originally used.”

Judith Wright, Boots UK Archivist

The company has successfully taken inspiration from the past and translated it into viable consumer products. Using customer insights and trends analysis, Boots identified a demand for high quality skincare products that embodied traditional ‘purist’ values in terms of product formulation and quality. The product development team was tasked with creating a new global beauty brand with an authentic 1920s look and feel.

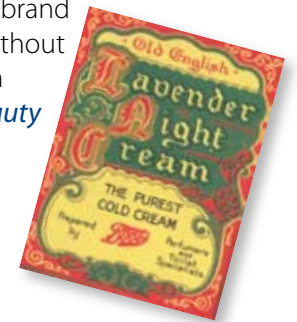
The product developers, working in collaboration with the company’s archivists, had access to specific historical product knowledge and market information across the 160 years the company has been trading. Together they were able to identify and adapt original ingredients and merchandising for the modern market. Once the bath, body and face product formulations were agreed, they went on to create appropriate packaging, nomenclature and style so that all aspects of the new customer offer had authentic retro appeal.

Annabel Franks, Head of Beauty Brands at Boots UK, says, *“This range brings back to life the best of our amazing formulation and packaging archive, celebrating the tradition and history which makes Boots the great brand it is today.”*

Using the archives to develop this brand has had significant PR appeal and the story of Original Beauty Formula’s research and development has been well-received by the press and helped market the new brand. The advantage here is that the brand has historical integrity, it’s not merely a marketing construct, since by re-using genuine product information Boots UK has created something authentic, albeit within the context of modern manufacturing and quality assurance processes.

This innovative use of Boots UK’s design and packaging archive delivered the new global beauty brand to market, quickly and cost-effectively without compromising the company’s reputation for product quality and efficacy. *“The beauty industry and press absolutely loved it,”* says **Clare Stafford, Boots UK, Public Relations Team.**

boots.com



The creation of the National Health Service in 1948 led to a vast increase in dispensing

Today, Boots is the UK’s leading health and beauty retailer, with around 2,600 outlets, from local community pharmacies to large health and beauty stores

The Boot family began trading in 1849, selling herbal remedies from a small store in Goose Gate, Nottingham



The Boots Company PLC is the owner of the Boots logo and the trademark Boots Original Beauty Formula



HSBC Holdings plc

The rich treasures of a company's history can be used to effectively support the human resource of a business. Recruiting, retaining and developing your staff is essential whether you are a small or multi-national business. Archive material can be used to promote the company internally to staff, focusing on history to engender company loyalty and pride.



In 2001 HSBC commissioned an art installation called the History Wall for the foyer of their new head office in London. The installation was created by reproducing historical images from the HSBC archive onto nearly 4,000 aluminium flags and arranging them in chronological order. The resulting artwork, of great beauty and sophistication, captures the values and character of the company. The History Wall is used as part of company induction programmes. New head office employees are given a guided tour of the History Wall, while those at international locations can access an accompanying publication and DVD. In this way, the company history is used to engage new generations of employees, communicating and bringing to life long-established corporate values. The bank also has a tradition of supporting scholarship in banking history, with a new work in prospect for its 150th anniversary in 2015.

"How the corporate culture has evolved; how it is contributing to shareholder value; how it can be nurtured for the good of future generations - there is no more seriously important topic of conversation within our Board. The History Wall represents the development of our culture, capturing it in a way that makes this critical subject easily understandable to everyone within HSBC."

Stephen Green, Group Chairman, HSBC Holdings plc

hsbc.com

History Wall image courtesy of Steve Speller



The HSBC Group is named after its founding member, The Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation Limited, established in 1865

By the 1880s, the bank was acting as banker to the Hong Kong government

HSBC has been both a pioneer and pillar of banking in many communities around the world and is very proud of its history

In 2001, HSBC commissioned an art installation called the History Wall for the foyer of its new head office

YOUR M&S

Marks & Spencer

Marks & Spencer is one of the UK's leading retailers of clothing, food and homeware, with over 21 million people visiting its 668 UK stores each week. The company story begins in 1884, when Michael Marks, a Russian-born Polish refugee, opened a stall at Leeds Kirkgate Market.

The M&S business was founded on five core company values – Quality, Value, Service, Innovation and Trust. These values remain as important today as they were then, and the evidence that shows how they have shaped the M&S business over the last 125 years can be found in M&S' extensive Company Archive. The archive includes more than 60,000 items, and is a rich source of all types of material including examples of clothing, merchandise, packaging, corporate records, human resource and welfare records, advertising and a large photographic collection.

"M&S has been at the heart of the community for 125 years. Since we began life as a market stall in Leeds we have amassed a wonderful collection of products and memorabilia that offer an intriguing insight into the M&S of today."

Sir Stuart Rose, M&S Chairman

The M&S business was founded on five core company values, which remain as important today as they were then

M&S sold its first bra in 1926. It now sells 45 bras every minute its stores are open

Sell-by dates were introduced by M&S in 1970 – several years before they became part of government legislation

In the 1970s, M&S employed Italian designer Angelo Vittuci to give the menswear group an injection of fashion know-how



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In 2009 – the company's 125th anniversary year – Marks & Spencer and the University of Leeds announced a new partnership that will see highlights of the company's archive exhibited to the public for the first time in the University's Centenary Gallery. This has presented M&S with the perfect opportunity to invest in its unique heritage, making it accessible to employees, customers, and the academic community.

"The academic potential of the company's archive is considerable for staff and students and it will be a valuable resource for education and research."

Professor Michael Arthur,
Vice-Chancellor, University of Leeds,

The exhibition, named *Marks In Time*, traces M&S' journey from market stall to penny bazaar to international retailer; showcasing how M&S is woven into the fabric of British life – from the clothes we wear and the food we eat, to the high moral and ethical standards we expect from businesses and employers today. Elements from the exhibition

will be used at events throughout the year, for example a display at the AGM and a fund-raising gala dinner. A DVD of the exhibition will be sent to all stores and a touring exhibition featuring highlights from the display in Leeds will visit key stores around the country. A website has also been created to accompany the exhibition which includes educational downloads for Key Stages 2 and 3 and an area where visitors can submit their memories of M&S.

A range of celebratory archive-inspired products were created for sale in stores, a commemorative history book was published and a list of 125 fascinating facts about the company has been drawn up and used for internal and external communications. The company is also working closely with the University of Leeds to encourage links with the local community, for example engaging schools and disadvantaged groups through outreach programmes and working with local institutions like the recently re-opened Leeds City Museum to encourage interest in local history and promote tourism.

"We feel it is our duty to protect and conserve our retail heritage and make it available for both our internal and external users. The M&S Company Archive has been rated as having the potential to be one of the most academically valuable corporate archives in Britain. Making this more widely accessible can only act to enhance the reputation of the company and improve our understanding of its important and enduring role in British society."

Alison Houston,
Head of the M&S Company Archive

This kind of innovation is seen as imperative for the business's continued success. It is recognised throughout the company that M&S innovation is what differentiates it from its competitors. The redevelopment of the M&S Company Archive will be of great benefit to its customers, allowing them to experience a real taste of M&S history, to find out more about the company that they have known and loved for years, helping to trace the social history of Britain.

The availability of archive material for use within the business also has direct benefits. Archive imagery and material has been cleverly used to attract and intrigue customers, thereby driving footfall into M&S stores. Creatively, the M&S Company Archive is now seen as a key design and learning resource, and due to the raised profile, it is one of the first points of call when new ideas, designs or methodologies are being considered. The historic merchandise has provided the inspiration for new product ranges inspired and influenced by the archive, for instance the use of archive images on retro food packaging, textile and fabric patterns on M&S Kitchen tabletops, trays and light shades and the creation of a bespoke line of garments inspired by the archive for the company's '125' range.

The project to redevelop the archive has changed the way that the business as a whole regards its history. From a business perspective it makes good commercial sense to explore past actions to ensure that the company is learning from and building upon its successes and failures, focusing on implementing cost-effective business practices. The profile and use of the archive has risen dramatically. An overview of the history of the company is part of the induction process for every new recruit. The archive is regularly used by a diverse range of departments, including the Press Office, the Design Department, the Food Group and the Legal Department. The commitment to recognising the company's history and staying true to the core values the company has had since its earliest days has helped to reaffirm the brand with customers and colleagues throughout the company in these challenging economic times.

In the longer term, the company announced on 4 June 2009 their plans to relocate the entire M&S Company Archive to a new purpose-built facility at the University of Leeds, where the archive will be fully opened to the public, students and academics while continuing to function internally as an important business tool. Use of the archive will also act as a window to explore the impact of retailing and business on the social history of Britain.

marksintime.marksandspencer.com

National Grid

Since January 1996, National Grid has embarked on more than 500 land clean-up projects, invested over £205 million and reclaimed over 1,500 acres of land. The positive impact of this land regeneration work is evident throughout the UK, as hundreds of former gasworks sites, closed down following the introduction of natural gas from the North Sea, have been cleaned up, enabling them to be redeveloped and returned to beneficial use, helping both the environment and local communities.

National Grid's land regeneration work uses information contained in their extensive company archive. Using a collection of gas site plans and other material, dating as far back as the mid-nineteenth century, National Grid is better informed in seeking to pinpoint areas of potential contamination caused by its predecessor companies when using industrial processes to convert coal into gas.


Detailed site plans, photographs and associated material complements and helps target site investigation and remedial action, minimising disruption to the local community and the time taken to clean up the land. In turn, this allows National Grid to focus its investment and resources into regenerating land efficiently and effectively.

Steve Holliday, Chief Executive of National Grid, explains: *"National Grid understands the value of maintaining a company archive; our case study demonstrates how we draw on our vast collection of historic information to help deliver our Corporate Social Responsibility policy, which is focused on safeguarding our global environment for future generations."*

The recent regeneration of 'The Forthquarter', Granton, Edinburgh provides an example of how archived information contributed to the efficient regeneration of land, to the benefit of the local community. At the close of the nineteenth century, Granton Gasworks was Scotland's largest single gas production plant.

Following decommissioning of the plant in the mid-1990s, a land remediation strategy, which drew on archived information such as photographs and site plans, has turned the gasworks into National Grid's flagship development site. Today, 'The Forthquarter' is a 110-acre site, offering commercial, residential, educational and leisure development opportunities.

In addition to informing land regeneration, the archive collection consistently proves its value in assisting local authorities and others to understand the environmental and structural impact of former gasworks in their areas and in resolving queries on the legacy of former industrial land uses.

 nationalgrid.com

Treatment works at Granton involved the excavation and removal of 120,000 tonnes of contaminated soils and the removal of redundant pipework and plant associated with the former gasworks

National Grid's land regeneration work (for example at the Granton Gasworks site in Scotland) uses information contained in its extensive company archives

Just 4 km from the city centre, with views across the Forth Estuary, this 110-acre site now offers commercial, residential, educational and leisure opportunities and represents one of the city's largest strategic mixed use developments



Opta Sportsdata

Opta Sportsdata is leading a revolution in the way we understand, consume and enjoy watching sport. Opta Sportsdata uses leading-edge technology to compile team and player performance data for a range of sports and has quickly become a staple for a variety of organisations. These range from broadcasters using the data to develop innovative television graphics solutions, to coaches using the information to monitor and compare team and player performances from week to week.

In the information age, Opta data has become business-critical to both media and sports professionals who rely on high quality accurate information to evolve and stay ahead of the competition. Opta has to manage its current and archive data effectively, such as the Opta Index, created in 1996 which rates players in the Premier League across six positions.

"We believe football is about more than just match day. It's now an everyday experience – the build-up, the match, the post-match discussion, the ongoing debates: all these drive a hunger for information and generate a demand for Opta to satisfy."

Mark MacCombie, UK Sales Manager, Opta Sportsdata

As Europe's leading compiler of sports performance data with offices in England, Germany, Italy, Spain and Switzerland, the Opta brand is one of sport's most recognised names and is associated with reliability and credibility amongst fans and professionals alike. Opta technology has redefined the way in which we understand and consume sport. Its philosophy and success is an alliance between information, technology, brand and sporting know-how.

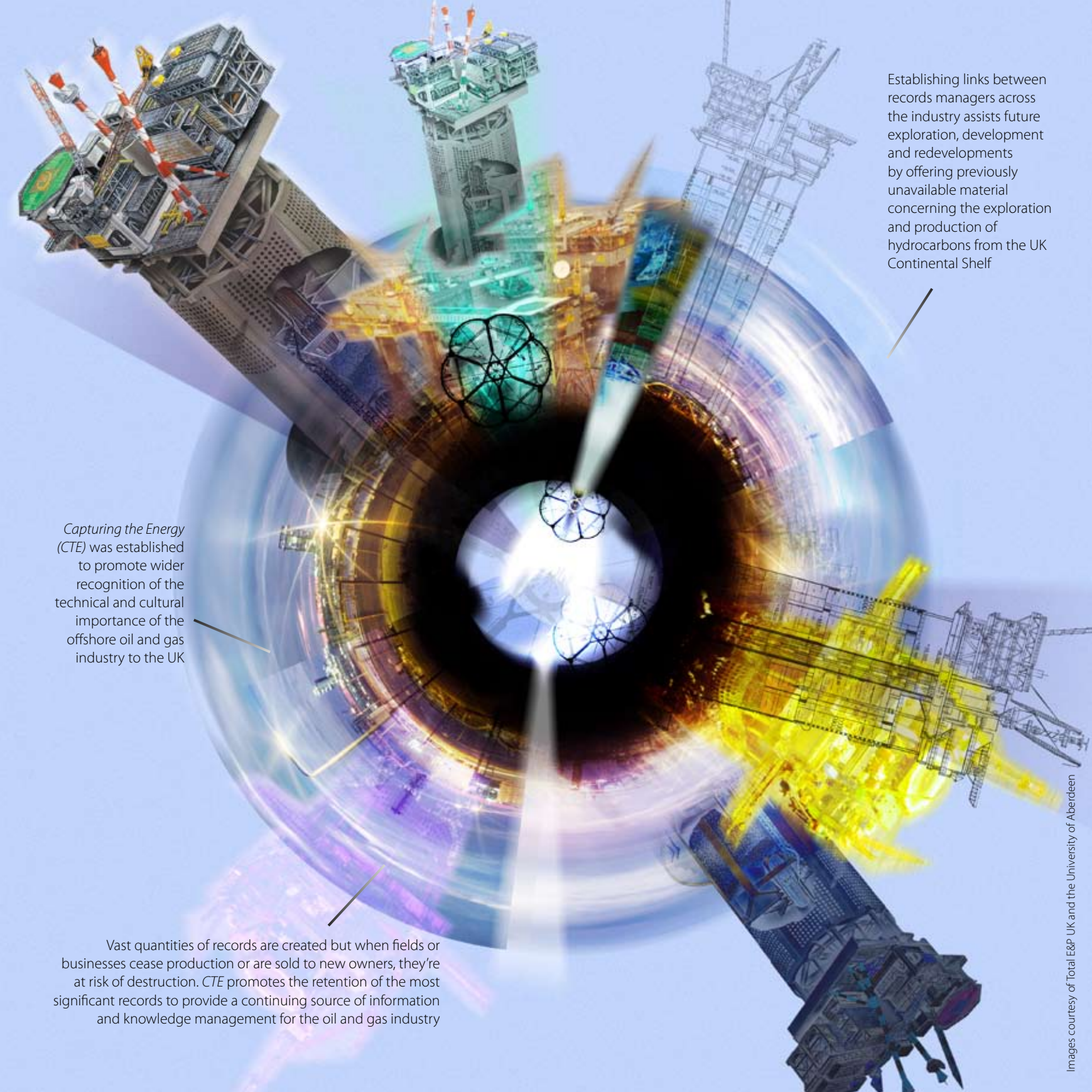
Opta data opens up a new world of detailed player performance analysis that can be presented in multiple ways to the consumer or professional. Its products range from editorial features for newspapers, mobile data feeds, internet applications and television programmes to scientific and tactical calculations for professional coaches across the globe.

Companies all over the world use Opta data. These include newspapers, television stations, sponsors, magazines, video text providers, fantasy football games, websites, mobile operators, PDA service providers, football clubs and associations and betting companies.

Opta needs to manage, store, retrieve and develop its information resources to expand into other sports and new markets, and to remain at the forefront of sports performance analysis.

 optasportsdata.com





Establishing links between records managers across the industry assists future exploration, development and redevelopments by offering previously unavailable material concerning the exploration and production of hydrocarbons from the UK Continental Shelf

Capturing the Energy (CTE) was established to promote wider recognition of the technical and cultural importance of the offshore oil and gas industry to the UK

Vast quantities of records are created but when fields or businesses cease production or are sold to new owners, they're at risk of destruction. CTE promotes the retention of the most significant records to provide a continuing source of information and knowledge management for the oil and gas industry

Images courtesy of Total E&P UK and the University of Aberdeen

CASE STUDY Future-proofing industry



Total E&P UK Ltd

The oil company Total E&P UK Ltd has been a key driver of a project to promote and preserve the history and achievements of the offshore UK oil and gas industry. This is a project it believes will be an asset for the sector, will enhance research and education programmes and will capture the history of the industry for future generations.

In partnership with the University of Aberdeen's Library and Historic Collections, the *Capturing the Energy* project has created a permanent base in the city of Aberdeen for documents dating back over the 50 years since the industry was founded.

"The North Sea oil and gas industry represents one of the most remarkable success stories in the history of the UK. The technical achievements of the past 30 years are awesome and deserve to be remembered, celebrated and learned from," says **The Rt Hon Brian Wilson**, former Energy Minister and *Capturing the Energy* patron.


There is a vast body of knowledge within companies such as Total E&P and public sector organisations which have been actively involved in the development of the North Sea oil and gas industry. *Capturing the Energy* is a powerful vehicle for recognising the immense contribution made by all those in the industry, working at the frontiers of knowledge and in the most challenging of physical conditions. The offshore oil and gas industry is truly heroic and worthy of recording.

Why is Total E&P involved? The idea evolved from a Norwegian scheme to ensure the survival of records relating to the Total-operated Frigg Gas field, which straddled the UK-Norway median line and supplied up to a third of the UK's gas. The field ceased production in 2004 after 27 years. The project then grew in scope to try to capture the broader history of the UK offshore oil and gas industry.

This industry is among the most heavily regulated in the world, and as a result retains detailed, well-managed records. By keeping the most important records and ensuring that they are safely stored, archives can be made available for current and future research, for authors, the media, and for educational programmes to encourage wider recognition of the huge importance of this industry to the UK.

One of the main reasons for Total E&P's involvement is the desire to attract new blood into the industry, to combat the misconception that the oil and gas industry is effectively finished in the UK. The UK industry can also help the rest of the world to maximise oil and gas recovery using skills honed in the UK. Total has invested in this project to invest in its own future and in that of its employees.

In addition to Total E&P and the University of Aberdeen, the Business Archives Council of Scotland, Scottish Enterprise Grampian, Aberdeen City Council, The Department for Energy and Climate Change, BP, Shell, ConocoPhillips and Oil and Gas UK are all project partners, making this a great example of the private and public sector working together to support a crucial part of the local economy in this industry.

 capturing-the-energy.org.uk
total.com



Celebrate and profit from your past when looking forward

The great appeal of business archives is that they can be used in a wide variety of ways to support key aspects of your business. Many archivists have a dual qualification in modern records management so that by working with compliance officers, information managers, legal and financial teams, they can ensure that record-keeping across your business is both compliant and efficient.

The information contained in routine business records such as minute books, accounts, strategic plans, product literature and packaging, adverts and photographs can be translated by skilled archivists, product designers and marketing experts into brand and product histories, innovative ideas for business development, public relations campaigns, display and point of sale materials, and presentations.

When the John Lewis Partnership wanted inspiration to design their eye-catching new Leicester department store where did they turn to? Their historic textile collection, where a fabric design commissioned by a London linen-draper in 1803 provided the creative spark for the striking glass façade of the building. This has created a landmark building, cementing the company's presence in the city as a retailing force to be reckoned with.

During the summer of 2009, household names such as Persil, Sainsbury's and Hovis have produced high profile TV and poster campaigns that focus on their histories and images from their archives, to reinforce messages of quality, reliability and permanence. Premier Foods, the makers of Hovis, has reported a leap in sales, which has partly been attributed to a clever

advertising campaign together with a website promoting the brand's history that appeals to consumers with references to the past and tradition.

Companies are also using anniversaries, confirmed by material in their archives, to celebrate and promote products, corporate identity, and reach out to customers, suppliers, employees and the media. AGA Rangemaster, the company which manufactures range cookers, places great emphasis on its history. The Coalbrookdale foundry in which the AGA is made is where the Industrial Revolution began in 1709 and the modern range cooker was invented in Rangemaster's Leamington Spa factory in 1830. Current advertising campaigns highlight the brands longevity and history. **William McGrath, Chief Executive of AGA Rangemaster Group plc**, says, *"We should celebrate our history and show how with AGA and Rangemaster, we are still innovating with British-made products that have true international significance."*

Linking celebrations into current activities is a great way to promote your business. Fortnum & Mason marked its 300th anniversary in 2008 with a £24 million refurbishment of its landmark London store.

And it's not just long-established companies that use their past to remind their markets of who they are and where they came from. Google celebrated its tenth birthday in 2008 by asking Googlers to muse about the next decade's technological advances and their possible impact on the world. Only by understanding where we have come from can we understand what is possible in the future.

Business archives in the UK

Britain was the birthplace of the Industrial Revolution and the historical records of British businesses provide crucial commentary not only on Britain's economic, political and social development, but also on that of many countries around the world. The lessons of business success and failure inform the thinking of current business leaders and can drive competitive advantage in the new global economy.

The preservation and practical use of the historical records of business has a long tradition in the UK. Most in-house corporate archives are established primarily to meet the needs of the business and to identify and safeguard archives as a financial or historical asset. Companies retain records for operational and legal reasons, and to contribute to making maximum use of the history and identity of a company for commercial advantage and gain. Today many companies operate formal archives, and business archives maintain healthy and productive partnerships with local authorities, universities and specialist archives.

Enterprises, whether large or small, drive our national and local economies, touching the lives of all British citizens whether they are business employees or consumers. Business success and failure also define communities – economically and physically – and consequently the people of those communities. It is critical for social cohesion and cultural identity that this business legacy is not forgotten, and is preserved to benefit us all.

"Business archives are an essential part of our national story. Used wisely, the corporate memory can inspire, inform and innovate in today's business."

Natalie Ceeney, Chief Executive, The National Archives

A national strategy for business archives

In 2009 The National Archives and the Business Archives Council, in partnership with a consortium of archival organisations, launched a five-year strategy for business archives in England and Wales. The aim is to help businesses realise the commercial potential of their archives and how this 'secret' asset can be managed. Key objectives are:

- To promote the commercial value of archives to the business community, encouraging wider and better business sector management of archives.
- To raise the profile of business records with the public.
- To encourage the improved care and management of business archive collections.

What does this mean for your business?

To help your business manage its archives, The National Archives is offering free professional advice and support at a national and regional level. The Business Archives Advice Manager (based at The National Archives) can answer your questions and provide advice on archive management. They will be able to put you in touch with local experts so you can get local advice on record-keeping.

In addition the **Business Archives Best Practice** website offers a step-by-step guide to managing archives. It's aimed predominately at company employees with no prior knowledge of archive management and is supported by The National Archives, the Business Archives Council and a consortium of UK professional archive organisations. The website has information about:

- setting up an in-house business archive;
- getting expert advice on funding, legal issues, access, preservation and storage; key records to keep; exploiting your archive;
- sustaining and growing your archive through best practice;
- partnerships and collaboration in archive management and outsourcing your archive collection;
- depositing business archives with a university, city or local authority archive; setting up a charitable trust to manage your archives; outsourcing records; storage and retrieval;
- commissioning a company history or research project.

To find out more:

- Visit the **Business Archives Best Practice** website managingbusinessarchives.co.uk
- Contact Alex Ritchie, Business Archives Advice Manager at The National Archives for copies of the **National Strategy for Business Archives**, and general advice on keeping business archives. Email asd@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk or telephone 020 8392 5270.




Where to go for further information

The following organisations can help you find out more about making the most of your archives to support your business objectives:


The National Archives is a government department and an executive agency of the Ministry for Justice, and is at the heart of information policy. The National Archives is the UK government's official archive, containing 1,000 years of history. It is at the forefront of developing archival services for the public and plays a key role in leading and advising the archive sector.

 nationalarchives.gov.uk

The Business Archives Council was founded in 1934 to promote the preservation of business records of historical importance, to provide advice and information on business archives and modern records, to encourage interest in and study of business history and to provide a forum for the custodians and users of business archives.

 businessarchivescouncil.org.uk


The National Council on Archives brings together archive service providers, users, depositors and policy makers across the UK concerned with archives and their use. It aims to develop consensus on matters of mutual concern and provide an authoritative common voice for the archival community.

 ncaonline.org.uk


The Museums, Libraries and Archives Council is the strategic body working with and for the museums, archives and libraries sector. The MLA is a Non-Departmental Public Body sponsored by the Department for Culture, Media & Sport.

 mla.gov.uk


CyMAL (Museums, Archives and Libraries Wales) is a division of the Welsh Assembly Government. It provides advice and support to local museums, archives and libraries in Wales.

 wales.gov.uk

The Society of Archivists is the professional body representing archivists, records managers and conservators in UK and Ireland archives.

 archives.org.uk

The British Records Association was founded in 1932, and aims to encourage and assist with the preservation, care, use and publication of historical records.

 britishrecordsassociation.org.uk

"I am delighted that Marks & Spencer and Leeds University are forming a partnership to preserve and make available the company's historical archive. The present uncertain economic climate seems just the right moment for this long-established business to provide, through its archive, the raw material to help historians and budding entrepreneurs to understand how businesses work, why and how they are set up, what makes them successful and even why they are more successful at some times than at others."

**Dame Stella Rimington DCB,
Director-General MI5 1992-96, former archivist**



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BA/2009/01 July 2009



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